



OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

SHEILA SIMON – LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

P-20 Joint Education Leadership Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 14th at 1:30pm

Lt. Governor's Capitol Office
Springfield, IL

Lt. Governor's Chicago Office
James R. Thompson Center
Chicago, IL

A- Roll Call

Springfield

Lt. Governor Sheila Simon
State Superintendent Chris Koch, IL State Board of Education
Interim Executive Director Harry Berman, IL Board of Higher Education
President Geoff Obrzut, IL Community College Board
Executive Director Eric Zarnikow, IL Student Assistance Commission
Executive Director Janet Holt, IL Education Research Council
Max McGee, P-20 Data Assessment and Accountability Committee
Susie Morrison, IL State Board of Education
Al Phillips, IL Board of Higher Education
Dan Cullen, IL Board of Higher Education
Deb Meisner-Bertauski, IL Board of Higher Education
Karen Hunter Anderson, IL Community College Board
Nathan Wilson, IL Community College Board
Brenda Klostermann, IL Education Research Council
Julie Smith, Governor's Office
Lynne Haeffele, Lt. Governor's Office
Crystal Saint, Lt. Governor's Office

Chicago

Miguel del Valle, P-20 Council Chairman
Amber Kirchhoff, Governor's Office
Maria Capoccia, Lt. Governor's Office

Phone

Lizanne DeStefano, P-20 Council

Absent

Theresa Hawley, IL Early Learning Council

Acting Director Adam Pollett, IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Guest

Jessica Handy, Stand for Children

B- Approval January 2013 Meeting Minutes

Lt. Governor Simon asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by Zarnikow and seconded by Obrzut. Motion was passed unanimously.

C- Report on the National Student Clearinghouse State Comparisons of Postsecondary Educational Attainment with Harry Berman, Interim Executive Director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education

Berman presented data made available in February of 2013 by the National Student Clearinghouse which compared student attainment rates across all fifty states.

The mission of the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is to serve the education community by facilitating the exchange and understanding of student enrollment, performance, and related information. The NSC receives data from more than 3,300 colleges and universities which enroll over 96% of students in public and private U.S. institutions. The NSC website may be accessed [here](#).

In November, 2012, the NSC released a report entitled *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates*. In February, 2013, the NSC released a supplemental report entitled *Completing College: A State-Level View of Student Attainment Rates*. This report provides a state-by-state look at the various pathways that students take to complete a college degree or certificate. This study focuses on students who began college in 2006 and the six-year completion rates of those students.

The data from the state-level study will be important for educators, in light of the traditional challenges of tracking completion rates. Typically, traditional graduation rate calculations are institution-based and count students who begin as freshmen and finish at the same institution where they started. Unfortunately, the NSC has found that one-third of first-time college students attend multiple institutions before earning a degree or certificate, impacting those traditional graduation rate calculations. The NSC state-level report on student attainment rates measured rates of first completion and subsequent completions, which will capture postsecondary credentials of all levels and types at any institution in any state.

Students studied as part of the NSC state-level report were enrolled in three types of schools: 4-year public institutions, 2-year public institutions, and 4-year private or non-profit institutions. Student data were divided by several variables, including age (under 24 or over 24) and enrollment status (full-time or part-time). The study captured all levels of degree completion.

The NSC state-level report highlighted several strengths of student attainment rates at public universities in Illinois. Illinois' public universities rank 5th in the nation for total completion, 6th in the nation for first completion rates at starting institutions, 1st in the nation for completion rates for part-time students, and 3rd in the nation for completion rates for adult learners.

After the six-year completion deadline, the NSC found that 72.7% of students at a public university in Illinois completed their first degree, compared to the national average of 60.6%. Similarly, the study found that 61.4% of Illinois public university students completed their first degree at their starting institution, compared to the national average of 48.7%.

Illinois' also ranked 1st in the United States in terms of completion rates for part-time students. The NSC found that part-time students at public universities in Illinois had a completion rate of 39.3%, which is significantly higher than the national average of 19.0%. At the same time, 35.8% of part-time students at public universities in Illinois completed their first degree or certificate at their starting institution, in comparison to the national average of 15.5%. However, while it is encouraging to see that Illinois is trending well above the national average for part-time students, it is impossible to ignore that part-time students at public universities still have a significantly lower completion rate than full-time students.

Illinois appears to have a positive impact on its adult students – those over the age of 24 – at public universities. Adult students at public universities in Illinois had a total completion rate of 60.8%, compared to the national average of just 44.5%. Similarly, 55.4% of adult students at public universities in Illinois completed their first degree or certificate at their starting institution, as compared to the national average of 38.7%.

The NSC state-level report also highlighted several strengths of student attainment rates at community colleges in Illinois. Illinois community-college students are above the national average in terms of their total completion rate. Illinois is 4th in total completion rates for full-time community college students, 2nd in terms of subsequent completion rates for full-time community college students, and 4th in completion rates for community college students who are 24 and younger.

In terms of the total completion rate of students at Illinois' community colleges, Illinois students trend above the national average. In Illinois, 40.8% of community-college students completed a degree or certificate within the six-year outcome period, compared to the national average of only 36.3%. However, it is still important to note that 41.9% of community-college students in Illinois were no longer enrolled at any institution and did not complete a degree after the six-year outcome period, and 17.4% of students were still enrolled at an institution with no degree. In comparison to public-university students, these completion numbers are low. However, these numbers are still trending above the national average for community college students.

One highlight of the NSC state-level report, when reviewing data on community college students, is that Illinois ranks 4th in total completion rates for its full-time community college students. After the six-year outcome period, 64.2% of the full-time community college students being studied in Illinois had completed a degree or certificate, compared to the national average of 52.6%. However, it is important to recognize that 60% of community college students in Illinois are part-time students impacting the generalizability of these numbers.

Further, Illinois ranks 2nd in subsequent completion rates for full-time community college students who continue on to receive another degree. After the six-year outcome period, 21.2% of the full-time

community college students being studied in Illinois had completed a subsequent degree, compared to the national average of 13.5%. Although the State of Illinois does have recognizable issues in transferring students from community colleges to 4-year universities, this data shows that Illinois has been extremely successful overall in comparison to the national average. However, it is important to recognize that further progress can be made – and will be necessary – to increase the subsequent completion rates of community-college students.

Illinois also ranked 4th in completion rates for community college students 24 and younger, at 9.1% compared to the national average of 6.2%. Data on younger students was all-inclusive of both part-time and full-time students, which may explain a portion of the decrease in overall completion from other segments of the study.

Berman noted that the NSC report highlighted several challenges for public universities and community colleges. First, the report highlights the severe difference in completion rates between full-time and part-time students. The State of Illinois cannot force students to attend college full-time, and for many students, full-time attendance would be impossible. However, Berman argued that many students begin their college experience by “testing the waters” – in other words, by taking one class at a time. The State of Illinois should work to encourage those students, if they are at a stage of life at which they can be full-time students, to enroll as a full-time student. Further, the State of Illinois must develop strategies to boost the completion rates of older, returning students.

Hunter Anderson noted that the average age of Illinois’ community college students is 31, making it difficult for most students to enroll full-time. Berman agreed that promoting full-time attendance would be a delicate matter. He noted that the Illinois Board of Higher Education was sending representatives to a conference sponsored by Complete College America in April, 2013, to hear from the experience of the State of Hawaii which has sponsored a full-time campaign.

Haeffele commented that it is important to recognize that completion deadlines of six years will cut-off data on completion rates of students who are still continuing their education after that time period. She noted that the State of Illinois needs a continuous longitudinal system to measure completion rates over longer periods of time.

D- Discussion on the Promotion of the College Scorecard with Lt. Governor Sheila Simon

Lt. Governor Simon said that the White House recently adopted the concept of the College Scorecard and has made it available for use on the White House website, located [here](#). She encouraged the Council members to visit the website to experience the Scorecard. Lt. Governor Simon noted that she hoped to move forward from this progress by making Illinois a leader in providing this information to the public, by placing a link to the College Scorecard on each college and university website in Illinois. The Office of the Lt. Governor is currently working on language for a resolution that will accomplish this goal.

Lt. Governor Simon also commented that it will be important to pass this information to high school faculty and students in Illinois and invited members to provide ideas on how to best accomplish this goal.

Berman noted that when the College Scorecard was released by the White House, his office was asked to review it and to provide comments on its accessibility. He commented that the College Scorecard is

visibly appealing and provides a great tool to begin a college search. However, he noted that there are limitations to the College Scorecard in several areas.

Hunter Anderson noted that from the perspective of the community colleges, the College Scorecard does not address the core mission of Illinois' community colleges. She argued that the College Scorecard primarily serves traditional, first-time and full-time students who are planning on eventually receiving a university degree. For example, the College Scorecard does not address certificates, even though many students are seeking certificates as well as associates and bachelor degrees.

Simon responded that the Office of the Lt. Governor is attempting to integrate this issue into its College Report to accurately reflect the problems inherent in the use of these types of metrics.

Zarnikow noted that many of these types of projects have a refining process and that he expects the College Scorecard to improve over time.

E- Getting Tech-Ready for Common Core Testing with Christopher Koch, Illinois State Superintendent of Education

Koch said that after a tech-readiness calculator was distributed to school districts, only 25% of the districts felt they would be ready for common core testing. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is working to procure another, more in-depth survey that will question individual schools as to their readiness. Additionally, Common Core testing questions have already been added to the Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT), and the ISBE has received feedback as to the difficulty of those questions.

Morrison mentioned that eventually, the tech-ready Common Core testing questions will provide a cost savings. Koch noted that paper tests cost \$3.00 to \$3.50 more per test for every child that is tested.

Haeffele asked what type of reaction the ISBE had received on its projections for the cost of technology to implement this program. Koch responded that the ISBE had lobbied for the costs – \$250 million – to be included in the Governor's Capital budget, which did not occur. Since that time, the ISBE has spoken at budget hearings in the Illinois House of Representatives to build awareness for the needs of the program and its potential cost savings. Koch will also be speaking to the Illinois Senate on April 12.

Haeffele inquired as to how the JELC could provide assistance or support to the ISBE in procuring funding. Del Valle noted that the P-20 Council is planning to place a resolution on the agenda at its upcoming meeting in support of the requests of ISBE. Del Valle voiced his belief that it would be beneficial to have more entities go on record in support of the funding requests made by the ISBE. He also noted that legislators would benefit from hearing the hardships the districts would experience if these significant funding cuts continued.

Koch added that the ISBE has received negative feedback from some districts on the upcoming common core testing changes and similar changes to testing. He noted that increased resistance was coming hand in hand with the decreased funding for schools, which has changed the overall climate of education in the State of Illinois.

Simon suggested the development of a plan for the JELC to assist the ISBE in its priority areas. She suggested that a map could be made of the districts that would benefit the most from increased

connectivity to legislators, in order to increase the pressure on legislators to fix pertinent budget issues. Simon noted that she would be happy to facilitate this movement by providing the contacts available to the Office of the Lt. Governor to the ISBE.

F- Agency Updates (15 minutes)

Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) – Obrzut, Hunter Anderson

Obrzut will be retiring in under four months. The ICCB is conducting a national search for his replacement and hopes to have hired a replacement by the end of April.

Three of the ICCB's four suggested appointments for the Board were recently approved.

Obrzut and Hunter Anderson will be attending the National Pathways Conference at Harvard over the next week.

The Senate appropriations hearing for ICCB will be held on March 21, while the House appropriations hearing for ICCB will be held on April 11.

The Illinois Veteran Student Faculty and Staff Training Seminar will be held on Wednesday, April 3, at Parkland College. It is sponsored by the Illinois Veterans Board of Higher Education.

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

ISBE has received a better return than expected on the five essentials program for the first year. There are still a few glitches with the program, but the ISBE is working to find why the glitches are occurring and fix them. A large percentage of teachers, around 75%, have already responded to the program. Around 80% of districts have opened and begun the program. Participants will have until the end of March to respond, although some have asked for extensions.

The next ISBE meeting will be held on March 15. ISBE will be taking comments on educator standards at the meeting.

ISBE supports recommendations to scale back the rules on special education class size and requirements regarding school nurses in order to give districts more flexibility. ISBE data shows that scaling back the class size rules for special education classes will actually assist special education students in getting the services that they need.

Koch noted that the ISBE plans to release information from the five essentials survey on the school report cards for the first time this year. School administrators will receive the data in June, and will have time to review its accuracy and request an audit if necessary. That data will then be released to the public on school report cards in the fall.

Illinois Board of Higher Education

Berman noted the Longitudinal Data System Intergovernmental Agreement is currently circulating. He asked if there had been any issues with that agreement so far, as his agency is planning to bring the agreement before its board. Hunter Anderson noted that the Illinois Community College Board is also planning to review the agreement.

Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA)

IMSA is conducting three online pilot programs for their student research projects, one of which featured students external to IMSA. McGee voiced his belief that there will be enormous potential for IMSA to support other schools throughout the State of Illinois with online programs. He noted that the online pilot programs have been far more successful than first imagined.

IMSA had its House appropriations hearing earlier this morning.

McGee also noted that he will be retiring at the end of the year.

Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)

ISAC completed its House appropriations hearing earlier this morning.

Suspension of the Monetary Award Program, which occurred on March 1, was the earliest it has ever been. This means that any student applying for an award on or after March 2 will be in suspense. This has occurred in part because the ISAC has been anticipating lower funding allocations for the Monetary Award Program. The award for the Monetary Award Program has been reduced by 5% in order to stretch the funding further.

It has become difficult for the ISAC to estimate the total appropriation that will be necessary for the Monetary Award Program, based on the number of qualified students who begin to attend school and claim their award. Almost 170,000 eligible applications were filed before the deadline this year. This is an increase of about 5.4% from the same time last year. The ISAC also noted an increase in applications from public and private universities, but a decrease in applications from students enrolled in community colleges.

Federal Pell Grant funding is still available to students. The ISAC is urging students to continue to apply for FAFSA funding. Around 94% of the students eligible for the Monetary Award Program are also eligible for Federal Pell Grants. Those grants provide the State of Illinois with around \$1.3 billion each year.

Illinois Education Research Council (IERC)

High school and college success reports were disseminated in late February. Institutions were given a few weeks to return the review and prepare any type of documentation for public relations releases.

Office of the Lt. Governor

Haefele highlighted the High School Graduation Achievement and Success Commission Report, which will be released soon. Smith noted that the final comments for the report are due tomorrow, and will be provided to the ISBE first.

The Office of the Lt. Governor prepared a P-20 Education Resource Document for the Education Caucus, which is available on the education tab of the Lt. Governor's website. This is a resource for new legislators who might be unfamiliar with the structure and work of the P-20 Council. The Office of the Lt.

Governor has suggested that this document should be provided to the P-20 Council in the future for recommendations.

P-20 Council

The P-20 Council is in the final stages of completing the P-20 Report. The report should be completed in the next 3-5 days.

- G- **Review of the Updated JELC Report** with Maria Capoccia, Office of the Lt. Governor (10 minutes)

The Committee reviewed the draft JELC Report.

H- **Other Business**

Del Valle noted that he is on the board of Advance Illinois, which recently participated in the House appropriations hearing and issued a recommendation on changing the school funding proration.

- I- **Next meeting will take place Thursday, April 11th**

J- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.